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Letter dated 19 May 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I refer to presidential statement S/PRST/2009/15 issued by you on the situation in Somalia on Friday, 15 May 2009.

In this connection, I wish to put on record my Government's strong opposition to, and categorical rejection of, the unsubstantiated accusations levelled against my country as described in operative paragraph five of the presidential statement.

My Government is indeed appalled by the unwarranted decision of the Security Council to accuse a Member State on the basis of "reports" whose origins, underlying motivation and veracity have neither been acknowledged nor ascertained. Sadly, this pattern is not new. The fact is my country has been falsely accused of "sending troops or supplying weapons" to "this or that Somali faction" on several occasions before. Too often, these accusations were primarily motivated by, and conveniently timed with, illegal acts of interference and invasion of Somalia by certain powers and their regional allies.

The Security Council statement asserts that the "Transitional Federal Government is the legitimate, internationally recognized Government of Somalia". As my Government has underlined on many occasions, the highly complex and grave conflict in Somalia will not be resolved by arbitrary and ill-advised formulas that have no basis in international law and that do not reflect the wishes and sovereign political choices of the Somali people. "Transitional Governments" that are periodically hatched in non-inclusive incubators outside Somalia have never survived the test of time in the past years in spite of the huge military and financial support extended to them by their external sponsors. The illicit provision of arms associated with, and justified under, these acts have further added fuel to the simmering conflicts.

These experiments could have perhaps been excused had they not been fraught with massive loss of human life and suffering to the Somali people and with detrimental ramifications to the stability and security of the Horn of African region. But the human misery has been, and remains, too tragic for these disastrous "experiments" to continue without let up under this or that rationale.

As will be recalled, Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia at the beginning of 2007, with the deplorable endorsement of the Security Council, to prop up the previous "Transitional Government", entailed two years of chaos and mayhem. Over half a



million Somalis were dislocated; numerous villages pulverized in indiscriminate air attacks; and tens of thousands of civilians killed. At the time, the broad coalition of the Union of Islamic Courts was routinely condemned, wrongly labelled as "the epicentre of terrorism" while the "Transitional Government" of the day was condoned as the sole legitimate authority. The imperative for broad-based, inclusive processes of peacebuilding and national reconciliation was shrugged off. After two years of failure, we are again being called to sing the same chorus.

The people of Somalia should not continue to be victims of ill-advised experiments and formulas worked out elsewhere. They deserve better. And above all, their sovereign rights to form their own Government through their internal processes of peacebuilding and reconciliation should not be compromised.

(Signed) Araya Desta
Ambassador
Permanent Representative